



THE OLD MILL CREEK

www.oldmillschool.org
2008-2009 Issue No. 8

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OLD MILL HOBBY NIGHT

Thanks to all of the Old Mill students who shared their hobbies and collections at Hobby Night. There were fairies, Buddhas and Star Wars collections, dolls from all nations and animals of all types. There were coins, rocks, basketballs, stickers, bags, snowglobes, rubber ducks, a live bird, dragons, beads, knitting, God's eyes, marbles, balls, comic books, Calico Critters and so much more. Thanks to Merilee Borden, Jamie Lunder and all of the other adult volunteers who made Hobby Night a great success!



CALENDAR

- Thursday, April 2
ITAV Speaker Karen Mates
6:30 p.m. District Office
- Friday, April 3
PTA Exec. & General Meeting
8:45/9:00 a.m. Old Mill
- Wednesday, April 8
Old Mill Music Performance
1:50 p.m. Old Mill 3-5 grade
- Monday, April 13 to
Friday, April 17
Spring Break—No School
- Wednesday, April 22
School Board Meeting
6:00 p.m. District Office
- Monday, April 27 to
Friday, May 15
STAR Test Window
- Thursday, April 30
America Sings (5th grade)
5:00 p.m. Old Mill
- Friday, May 1
PTA Exec. & General Meeting
8:45/9:00 a.m. Old Mill
America Sings (5th grade)
1:50 p.m. Old Mill
- Monday, May 4 to
Friday, May 8
Teacher Appreciation Week
Remember Your Thank Yous!
- Wednesday, May 6
1st Grade Spring Concert
11:00 a.m. Old Mill
- Thursday, May 7
ITAV Speaker Diane Provo
6:30 p.m. Location TBD

DROP DON'T STOP SCHEDULE

WEEK OF MARCH 30
WEEK OF APRIL 20
WEEK OF MAY 4
WEEK OF JUNE 1
WEEK OF JUNE 15

ROOM 10
ROOM 8
ROOM 6
ROOM 15
DDS COMMITTEE (LAST DAY OF SCHOOL IS JUNE 17TH)

WEEK OF APRIL 6
WEEK OF APRIL 27
WEEK OF MAY 11
WEEK OF JUNE 8

ROOM 9
ROOM 7
ROOM 5
ROOM 14



PTA EXPRESS

by Leanne Hansen
& Deborah Goldman



Happy Spring! Please enjoy the glorious weather. We feel we must continue to give thanks for all that keeps our School, District and Community exceptional.

First, due to your efforts to pass the Parcel Tax in November and by raising almost \$2,000,000 via Kiddo, our School District has the funds it needs to continue providing the extraordinary education we all cherish. Thank you.

All of you continue to astound as many of you worked hours and hours to make the Kiddo Gala a huge success. They are estimating net proceeds to Kiddo around \$145,000, an extraordinary sum in our current economy. Thank you.

We want to continue to thank all of you for continuing to work tirelessly on the Lunch Program, Room Parenting, Yearbook, Site Council, Hobby Night, Author's Month, P.E. Fitness, Drop-Don't-Stop, Walk-to-School Wednesdays, Spirit Days, Lice Checks, and so much more. We have created an incredible machine that we need to keep running.

We want to make you aware of the latest challenges that face us. First, we have nearly 400 Kindergartners registered in Mill Valley for next year. The District is working feverishly to revamp schools and classrooms to fit all these new students as well as the expanding grades that continue upward. Thus, we must continue on with our work. The District is working on a Master Facilities Plan to incorporate these and many other changes. Please come to the Open Town Hall Meeting on April 7th to hear all the news.

Finally, we have nominated our new PTA Executive Board for 2009-2010. Please check out the posted list and thank everyone for continuing to volunteer in these important positions. These Board Members will also be looking for people to help in all that we do. So please let us know what you would like to work on. We need all the help we can get!

Enjoy Spring and our perfectly timed Spring Break!

Golden Sneaker Contest

If you WALK, BIKE, SCOOTER, or CARPOOL with another family to school, you will help your grade win the GOLDEN SNEAKER CONTEST! Students who participate get a hand stamp and orange juice in the courtyard on Wednesdays and the tally for the grade is marked on a poster located outside the school office. Additionally, there is a random day each week for additional credit. So get inspired, leave the car behind and enjoy a walk or bike ride with your children and their friends to school. Contest ends April 24th.

PTA Executive Board

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GRIST

by Jane McDonough



Welcome Spring and April! The coats, jackets and in-between clothing seems to jump on and off our students these days. Everyone is delighted to be outside, so we sometimes shed our jackets and then run around without ever remembering we had them on in the first place. Although this means the Lost and Found fills up with perfectly good abandoned clothes (and you should check it regularly) it also means that we are so glad to see the sun and the warm weather that comes with Spring at last!

So much happens between now and spring break, and then we move into the 100 days of May! It's all exciting stuff, though, and we look forward to more outdoor trips, projects, Science exploration that can include the outdoors, and, believe it or not, we even look forward to STAR testing, when we can show off what we know!

STAR tests will take place at the very end of this month, and will extend until May 8th. Please help us make this experience go smoothly by NOT taking students out of school for doctor appointments, special events, etc. as makeups are hard for the teachers and the students. Remember that the experience is an opportunity for *our* shining stars to show off all their well established knowledge, not something to be worried or anxious about. Teachers schedule the testing in blocks so that students don't get overwhelmed with too much at once, and we always find that the kids, for the most part, actually like them! Breakfast before school and plenty of rest is a definite DO to assist kids in doing their best work. The testing weeks are not a time to take on new or extra activities. Keeping a regular routine is very supportive to the process. Thanks for your cooperation on that in advance!

Site Council's Plan was approved by the School Board last month, and we are excited about certain elements that we have added to the plan we already are implementing and extending. Our partnership with Bahia Vista – a wonderful elementary school in San Rafael – is something we want to build into this and next year, with an eye to a long standing relationship. Our teachers are matched with teachers there for pen pal experiences in the short term, and perhaps some get together before the end of the year. We are excited about the opportunities that this will provide to both groups of students in terms of writing and communicating, as having an external audience (pen pals with real live envelopes and paper) provides a real incentive and excitement about writing that can be gotten no other way! Stay tuned for more information on that, and if you have questions or ideas, please talk to any of the Site Council members. (List on Bulletin Board to right of main hallway.)

Hobby Night will have come and gone when you get this. And thanks to all of those who help make it so fun for everyone. That tradition is something every child in our school looks forward to, whether collector or viewer!

Two fun spring special events approach as well. We will be having an all school Baseball Day on April 6th, hats allowed!

We will celebrate Poem in Your Pocket Day on April 30th. This is a national event, beautiful in its simplicity. All of us, kids and adults, will have a poem in our pocket that day. When you run into someone, wherever you run into them at school, you may ask them to recite (if memorized) or share their short poem that day. So you and your child(ren) might want to start choosing now, in order to avoid running out of the really good juicy poems that might get used up between now and then. Millé in Mill Valley will culminate our Poem Day on April 30th when the California Mille antique cars will come through Mill Valley and stop to make a short visit to Old Mill School around 2:25 that day. Students will assemble outside on the corner of Throckmorton and Mill Street to greet and cheer them on for a few minutes before the tour goes on into the town center.

Who ever said that school wasn't fun? Exciting? Full of adventures and challenges? Not those of us lucky enough to be in Mill Valley!

INDEBTED TO ALL . . .

It's been a couple of weeks since the Kiddo Spring Gala took place. The turnout was very good and the outcome fabulous, but what I am most gratified by- and deeply indebted to the entire Old Mill School community for- is the outpouring of help I received to get my part done. Having taken responsibility of the decorations was a daunting task. I was nervous to say the least, but I could not have asked for a more generous and supportive group of people. I need to thank everyone who helped me, and as much as I would like to mention everyone by name I am abstaining to avoid what we all know as an "Oscar moment." I thank those who served as my sounding board, helped find jars and other supplies, suggested sources and connections, helped cut, assemble, arrange, fill, paint, clean, organize, tie, hang, unpack, box, sort, rearrange, gave a sign of support or just plain threw a smile at me when I was spinning like a top. It's been almost three years since I hesitantly left New York and my 15-year old network of friends. But I easily made new friends in the Old Mill's uplifting school community. At Old Mill School, from our principal, the staff, teachers, parents and their children: I am lucky to be here and I am forever indebted to you. My most heartfelt thank you to all! Laura Diecks

Psychologically Speaking by Claudia Trinklein-Engman

Setting appropriate limits is extremely important for children and parents alike. I see far too many parents who admit to having a difficult time in this area and consequently, often set no limits at all. A parent of one of my 15-year old clients recently said that "I wish that someone would have hammered into my head 10 years ago the importance of stepping up to the plate. I find myself nowadays often just trying to keep the peace around my daughter and that usually means walking away from creating limits and typically, even if I have, not enforcing them."

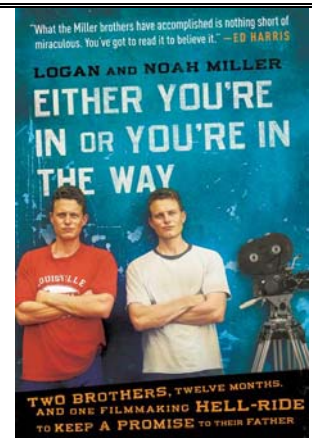
Every "rule" and limit in a family needs to be clearly communicated along with a consequence if it is not properly observed. Without limits, children are given more power and responsibility than they can usually handle. Without consequences, limits will not be honored. And the appropriate consequence needs to be immediately implemented without debate or discussion. DO NOT ever feel that you need to explain, justify, or cajole a child into understanding the limits. He or she does not need a power-point lecture on why limits need to be respected. People do not scream at each other in the home. Children take the hand of a parent when they cross the street. No one talks with his or her mouth full. These "rules" do not need to be debated. They need to be followed.

If you have been reluctant to set limits in the past and are about to change your approach, expect your child to "test" your sincerity. Children will test and push limits in an escalating fashion until they are clear how far they can go. As a general rule of thumb, their behavior will tend to worsen before it settles down. It is absolutely critical that you are consistent in your intent and your follow through.

Our generation, in contrast to our parents, tends to be loose on limits. This is in part due to a legitimate concern, perhaps, about not suppressing our young ones. But children do need limits and parents get resentful and upset without them. At the same time however, remember that limits are never to take the place of open communication among family members. The proper application of limits and consequences will save vast quantities of time spent in emotional upset with your youngster. Because limits are clearly defined and respected, you will spend much less time trying to control your child and more time in mutually nourishing interactions.

Parents of Future Mill Valley Middle School Students

We are very excited to announce MVMS' involvement with the Miller Brothers' project. Logan and Noah Miller, twins from West Marin, promised their father they would make this autobiographical film just before he died. The film, titled "Touching Home," details their struggles as they pursued professional baseball and the life lessons learned from their relationship with their father, played by Ed Harris. They then chronicled their journey in their book, "Either You're In or In the Way: Two Brothers, Twelve Months, and One Filmmaking Hell-Ride to Keep a Promise to Their Father," due out at the end of April. For every copy of the book pre-ordered from Book Passage with the MVMS promo code (mill09) by April 13th, twenty percent (\$5.40) will go back to MVMS. Please note that all books that are pre-ordered from Book Passage with the MVMS promotion code will be delivered directly to MVMS. We will contact you with pick-up details once the books are delivered. Check out their website (inorintheway.com) for more information.



A Word from Kiddo! . . .

Kiddo! Spring Gala & Auction - Thank You

We'd like to send a giant THANK YOU to all of the wonderful sponsors, volunteers and attendees who made our Spring Gala & Auction a fantastic success. This event would not have been possible without the help of hundreds of volunteers. Please go to <http://kiddo.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/03/gala2009-volunteers.pdf> to see a list of the amazing people who worked to raise over \$135,000 in just one fun-filled evening. It is heartening to know that even in difficult economic times like these, our community rallies together to support our children and quality education. We look forward to seeing everyone again at the 2011 Spring Gala & Auction!

Spring Concerts – Mark Your Calendar

Be sure to check the calendar of events on our website, www.kiddo.org, for a schedule of upcoming spring concerts, performances and events. You can search by school or type of event. Don't miss these wonderful opportunities to see your Kiddo! donations at work and to see your children shine....and don't forget your cameras!

Donation Day – May 1, 2009

On May 1, Kiddo! will launch its 2009 Annual Giving Campaign with Donation Day. We ask school district families to help Kiddo! lower fundraising costs by making their annual donations on a single day. Hundreds of families participate in this effort, which helps save valuable volunteer time and significantly decreases the cost of paper, printing and postage for follow-up mailings.

In light of the ongoing budget constraints facing our local schools, it is critically important that we financially support our children's education. We encourage you to make your annual contribution to Kiddo! on May 1 and help fund next school year's arts and technology programs as well as save classroom aides from budget cuts. Giving is easy – just drop off your donation at school, make your donation online at www.kiddo.org, or mail it in to 409 Sycamore Avenue. Thank you in advance for your participation in Kiddo!'s fundraising efforts this year – together we can protect the quality education our students deserve!

Community Art Exhibit May 1 - May 23

Visit Frame-O-Rama during the month of May and enjoy a wonderful exhibit of Kiddo! student art. We selected artwork from over 2,500 Kindergarten through 8th-grade public school students who receive art instruction thanks to your generous donations to Kiddo! There will be a reception on May 7 from 5:30pm – 7:00pm to honor the young artists. Frame-O-Rama is located at 487 Miller Avenue and is a valued member of our Business Partnership Program.

Take Me Out To The Ballgame – Kiddo! Night At The Giants, May 17

Cheer for the home team, hang-out with friends and neighbors and support your local schools all in one fun evening. This year's Kiddo! Night At The Giants is Sunday, May 17 at 5:00 p.m. and will feature the Mill Valley Middle School Chorus singing the National Anthem. It is also Cy Young Award winner Tim Lincecum Bobble Head night, so save the date and plan on getting to AT&T Park early to watch the kids sing and the Giants play the Mets! Bobble Heads to the first 20,000 in the gates.

Over 500 Mill Valley folks attended last year, so join us in our very own upper reserve section. Ticket are \$18 and \$8 of every ticket sold will benefit Kiddo! To purchase your tickets, go to <http://purchase.tickets.com/buy/MLBEventInfo?pid=6428858&agency=MLBTGS28GNTS>. For groups of 25 or more, call 972-2244 for a block of tickets and to get your group name on the scoreboard.

LUNCH PROGRAM FUNDRAISER WITH REVOLUTION FOODS

Now that you made your payment, place your order at order.revfoods.com for April. Orders can be made or adjusted until Wednesday preceding the order week. After you place your order, check your balance to make sure it is the same as or exceeds the amount due for future orders. To add to your balance, make your check payable to Old Mill PTA and drop it off in the envelope outside the office (get it in by April 29th for May orders). Questions? Please contact Molly Mercy at molly@foursquare.net or Heidi Whalen at heidi.whelen@sbcglobal.net.

News from the Mill Valley Public Library

Spring Break Film Festival, April 13-17 – FREE MOVIES and popcorn for the whole family in the Creekside Room. Join us at 3:30 pm: Monday 4/13 – Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa; Tuesday 4/14 – Max Fleisher’s classic Superman cartoons; Wednesday 4/15 – Space Buddies; Friday 4/17 – City of Ember. Special teen night (13 and older) screening of Twilight on Thursday 4/16 at 7:00 pm.

View fresh artwork from Mill Valley’s youngest artists during the Week of the Young Child from April 19-25. The Children’s Room will display artwork created by local preschool children.

Celebrate our green planet on Earth Day, Wednesday, April 22 with stories and an earth-friendly craft. Volunteers from the Library’s Teen Council will read stories and assist with crafts. 3:30 pm in the Creekside Room. All ages, no advance sign-up required.

Next month: Cinco de Mayo Bilingual Story Time & Craft on Wednesday, May 6 at 3:30 pm in the Creekside Room. All ages, no advance sign-up required.

For details and further information on all our programs, please call the Children’s Room (415-389-4292 x106) or visit our website at <http://millvalleylibrary.org>.



It Takes a Village Special Education PTA

Please check our website out to learn how we can help you and your child. We are at www.itavmv.org. Information about our speaker events (including speaker notes and handouts), parent coffees, and playgroups is posted.

Speaker Event: Karen Mates -- “Transitions – Middle School to High School”

Thursday, April 2nd 6:30-8:00 pm, Mill Valley District Office, 411 Sycamore Avenue

High school already? Karen Mates, Director of Special Education for the Tamalpais Union High School District, will talk about navigating through the high school years. She will give an overview of the Tamalpais District and the services available to students who learn differently at each site. She will discuss what you and your child need to do in order to get ready for success in this new adventure! At this meeting, ITAV members will also be voting on next year’s executive board. For more information, please contact Andrea Brandeis, 383-9800.

Parent Coffee – Friday, April 24th 9-11 am, 900 Ventura Way

Parents of children with learning differences face many challenges. Our coffees provide a chance for parents to share information and support each other. Please join us at the home of Tam Valley parent Pam Sowerby. If you have questions, please contact Pam at 380-9680, or pamsowerby@gmail.com.

Speaker Event: Diane Provo – “How to Talk so Kids will Listen – Solutions and More Solutions”

Thursday, May 7th 6:30-8:00 pm, Location TBD

Are you worn down by food fights, bedtime challenges, tantrums, whining and the dreaded “NO”? Do you find yourself using threats, bribes or a raised voice, though you swore you never would? Then join us at our May speaker event with acclaimed speaker Diane Provo. Diane will discuss how to engage your children’s cooperation, discipline them with respect and how to develop in them a strong sense of integrity and their own self worth. Diane Provo is an independent consultant who brings more than 35 years of intensive child development experience to her clients. Diane has co-authored two books and made hundreds of television and other speaking appearances. This is one meeting you do not want to miss!

Our educational programs are provided in collaboration with the Mill Valley PTA District Council and It Takes a Village Special Education PTA. For more information, please contact Andrea Brandeis, 383-9800.

Old Mill Creek Deadlines

Submit any Creek articles by email to drice@cov.com by the deadlines below (no pdf files please:

Articles Due April 26th for May 6th Issue

Articles Due May 24th for June 3rd Issue

If you want to see your child in The Creek, please submit photos of school events as jpeg files. Dale Rice, Editor